

## Introduction

Last spring, the State of Michigan implemented the first annual administration of the statewide English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA). The ELPA was administered to all English language learners who were enrolled in grades K through 12 and were eligible for limited English proficiency (LEP) services. The term English language learner, or ELL, has been adopted by the State of Michigan to refer to students who are limited English proficient (LEP).

The statewide administration of the ELPA was one of the first steps in improving the manner in which the English language proficiency of ELL students has been assessed. This fall, the State is taking a second step by providing an ELPA Initial Screening for new enrollees as a tool in determining eligibility for LEP services. Like the spring ELPA, the fall ELPA Initial Screening contains all four domains (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing). The fall version is shorter in length and designed to be scored at the time of administration. The overall score is reflective of the proficiency level that has been set for last spring's ELPA.

The development of the ELPA Initial Screening is also an important step in aligning both the content and performance expectations of assessments used with our English language learners. By recording these ELPA results in the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) secure website, all Michigan schools and districts have access to an ELL's most recent English language proficiency scores. When paired with other criteria that are used by local schools and districts for eligibility decisions, the availability of ELPA results can expedite the appropriate instructional placement of students who are learning English as a second language. The Initial Screening is Part A of this fall's ELPA.

The second part of this fall's ELPA Initial Screening supports our long-term goal to create uniform measures that support the teachers who help these students learn English so that our students can more effectively participate in academic courses taught in English. This summer, Michigan educators of English language learners met to develop assessment items with higher levels of linguistic difficulty and academic rigor to be added to next spring's ELPA.

Part B of the fall ELPA is composed of a short unit—6 to 14 questions—that consists of these newly developed items. Schools and districts are asked to administer Part B of the ELPA Initial Screening so that we can review how these items performed in preparation for the development of next spring's ELPA. If many of your new students have a very limited knowledge of the English language, please administer Part B items to some ELLs who are performing in the intermediate range of acquiring English language skills. Student answer choices for Part B items are entered into the OEAA secure website along with their raw scores for Part A. Data generated for Part B items are used to select items for the ELPA.

There is much work ahead to accomplish our long-range goal, and we appreciate the assistance of schools and districts in providing important feedback and assistance in helping us continue to improve the ELPA as a useful, diagnostic tool.

## Meeting Federal Requirements

---

Statewide administration of the ELPA meets federal assessment requirements for the annual assessment of all ELLs. As specified in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation of 2001, Title I requires the annual assessment of all ELLs who are enrolled in grades K through 12 to determine the progress in acquisition of the English language. Areas to be assessed and reported for Title III include English Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, and Comprehension. Proficiency levels are to include a basic, intermediate, and proficient level for each grade level assessed. Assessments are to be based on English language proficiency standards, which are to be adopted by each state. ELPA results are to be used annually for the Title III federal reporting of ELL student progress in acquiring English language skills. The reporting of last spring's ELPA results brings the State of Michigan into full compliance with federal requirements for an annual assessment that is based on state English language proficiency standards.

In Michigan, the ELPA Initial Screening has been designed to assist schools in determining eligibility for new enrollees this fall. The proficient level for this fall's overall score is reflective of the proficient standard set for last spring's assessment. This screening score may be used as an assessment tool to determine instructional placement for potential English language learners who enroll in Michigan schools this fall and do not have an ELPA score from last spring.

English language learners must fully participate in the state's administration of assessments that measure the state's academic content standards. In Michigan, these assessments are currently the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP). Administration of the ELPA can only be used in place of administering the MEAP English language arts assessment for newly arrived students. These are ELLs who have entered the United States for the first time and have been enrolled in a public school for fewer than ten months at the time of the MEAP assessments. To apply for the one-time exemption for a newly arrived ELL, please download the form from the OEAA website at [www.michigan.gov/meap](http://www.michigan.gov/meap).

Administration of the ELPA Initial Screening is NOT a substitute for the next ELPA annual assessment, which is to be given in the spring of 2007 as an annual assessment to all students who are eligible for LEP services during the 2006–2007 school year.

## Features of the ELPA Initial Screening

The goal of the ELPA Initial Screening is to measure the English language proficiency level of Michigan students who are being assessed to determine eligibility for LEP services. Both oral and written language are included in the assessment of listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills for academic and social settings.

Michigan's ELPA Initial Screening is a customized assessment. Like the spring ELPA that is used for annual reporting of performance, the fall ELPA is designed to be aligned with the Michigan English proficiency standards, which were approved by the State Board of Education in April 2004. Most of the items for the Initial Screening are drawn from last spring's ELPA.

The fall screening level to be administered to new students covers topics and content from the previous year. The title of each screening assessment includes an ELPA assessment level. ELL students take the assessment level designed for their current grade, not for their skill level, since items at each assessment level have been selected to represent a broad range of ability, making it more likely that ELLs who are new to the United States will be able to answer some items with confidence.

Each ELPA Initial Screening has two parts, Part A and Part B.

Part A contains four domains, or sections:

- **Listening**, with easy-to-administer multiple-choice questions;
- **Reading**, with easy-to-administer multiple-choice questions;
- **Writing**, a two-part section containing multiple-choice and open-ended questions; and
- **Speaking**, an individually administered set of performance tasks, scored by the assessment administrator or proctor at the time of administration.

Complete descriptions of the content domains of the ELPA are available by accessing the OEAA website at [www.michigan.gov/oeaa](http://www.michigan.gov/oeaa).

Part B is an additional section, or form. At assessment levels I, II, and III, these forms will cover one language domain (Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking) per form. At assessment levels IV and V, these forms may cover one language domain per form, or a combination of Listening and Speaking, or Reading and Writing. The assessment level for a grade level span has six to eight forms. A district's school will receive only one Part B form for a grade level span. It is possible that a school that administers more than one assessment level in the building may have a different Part B form for another ELPA level. (For additional information, please see the tables on pages 8 and 9.)

Last spring, the ELPA included four assessment levels—Primary, Elementary, Middle Grades, and High School—which matched the state's grade level spans for the English Language Proficiency standards. Based on input from ELL educators, the primary level has been divided into two parts, allowing the kindergarten assessment content to be pulled out as a separate level.

There are now five levels of assessment. The tables that follow show the grades included in each level, the sections of the assessment, and the total number of items per section. For the Speaking section, each student should be administered the assessment individually. All other ELPA sections can be administered either individually or in a group.

## Part A Sections

| Level | Grade in Fall 2006                          | Part A Sections                                                                                                          | Number of Items                       |
|-------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| I     | Kindergarten*<br>(pilot—oral sections only) | Listening<br>Speaking<br><br>(Total Points: 20)                                                                          | 8<br>4<br><br>Total: 12               |
| I     | 1                                           | Listening<br>Reading<br>Writing<br>• Writing Conventions<br>• Constructed Response<br>Speaking<br><br>(Total Points: 36) | 8<br>8<br>6<br><br>4<br><br>Total: 26 |
| II    | 2–3                                         | Listening<br>Reading<br>Writing<br>Speaking<br><br>(Total Points: 38)                                                    | 8<br>8<br>6<br>4<br><br>Total: 26     |
| III   | 4–6                                         | Listening<br>Reading<br>Writing<br>Speaking<br><br>(Total Points: 37)                                                    | 9<br>8<br>4<br>4<br><br>Total: 25     |
| IV    | 7–9                                         | Listening<br>Reading<br>Writing<br>Speaking<br><br>(Total Points: 37)                                                    | 9<br>8<br>4<br>4<br><br>Total: 25     |
| V     | 10–12                                       | Listening<br>Reading<br>Writing<br>Speaking<br><br>(Total Points: 37)                                                    | 9<br>8<br>4<br>4<br><br>Total: 25     |

\* This is a pilot year. Please supplement results with scores from other assessments that are customarily administered to incoming K students.

## Part B Sections

| Assessment Level | Grade in Fall 2006 | Form Number and Domains |           | Number of Items |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| I                | 1                  | 1                       | Listening | 12              |
|                  |                    | 2                       | Listening | 12              |
|                  |                    | 3                       | Reading   | 12              |
|                  |                    | 4                       | Writing   | 7               |
|                  |                    | 5                       | Writing   | 7               |
|                  |                    | 6                       | Speaking  | 8               |
|                  |                    | 7                       | Speaking  | 8               |

| Assessment Level | Grade in Fall 2006 | Form Number and Domains |           | Number of Items |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| II               | 2–3                | 1                       | Listening | 12              |
|                  |                    | 2                       | Listening | 12              |
|                  |                    | 3                       | Reading   | 13              |
|                  |                    | 4                       | Reading   | 13              |
|                  |                    | 5                       | Writing   | 6               |
|                  |                    | 6                       | Writing   | 6               |
|                  |                    | 7                       | Speaking  | 8               |
|                  |                    | 8                       | Speaking  | 8               |

| Assessment Level | Grade in Fall 2006 | Form Number and Domains |           | Number of Items |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| III              | 4–6                | 1                       | Listening | 14              |
|                  |                    | 2                       | Listening | 14              |
|                  |                    | 3                       | Reading   | 13              |
|                  |                    | 4                       | Reading   | 14              |
|                  |                    | 5                       | Writing   | 7               |
|                  |                    | 6                       | Writing   | 7               |
|                  |                    | 7                       | Speaking  | 7               |
|                  |                    | 8                       | Speaking  | 7               |

| Assessment Level | Grade in Fall 2006 | Form Number and Domains |                    | Number of Items |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| IV and V         | 7–9 and 10–12      | 1                       | Listening          | 14              |
|                  |                    | 2                       | Listening/Speaking | 10              |
|                  |                    | 3                       | Speaking           | 11              |
|                  |                    | 4                       | Reading            | 14              |
|                  |                    | 5                       | Reading/Writing    | 11              |
|                  |                    | 6                       | Writing            | 8               |